

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A surgical suture placement device comprising:
a handle assembly;
an elongated hollow outer tube connected at a proximal end to the handle assembly;
a suturing assembly rotatably secured to a distal end of the elongated hollow outer tube,
where a distal end of the suture placement device is the suturing assembly and the suturing assembly has a distal end that at its tip is arc shaped along an axial cross-section and the distal end has an outer diameter less than an outer diameter of a proximate end of the suturing assembly; and

a hollow inner tube located within the hollow outer tube and connecting the handle assembly to the suturing assembly by traversing the inside of the elongated hollow outer tube, wherein the hollow inner tube, handle assembly, and suturing assembly are non-rotatably connected to one another;

wherein the handle assembly is rotatable with respect to the hollow outer tube so that rotating the handle assembly while holding the outer tube stationary concurrently rotates the hollow inner tube and the suturing assembly as a unit and between the handle assembly and the distal end of the suturing assembly an exterior of the device has a substantially consistent diameter.

2. (Original) The surgical suture placement device of claim 1, wherein the suturing assembly comprises a holding member for removably holding a needle.

3. (Original) The surgical suture placement device of claim 2, further comprising the needle, and wherein the needle is hollow and has an open, sharp-tipped distal end.

4. (Original) The surgical suture placement device of claim 3, wherein the opened, sharp-tipped distal end of the needle comprises rounded edges.

5. (Original) The surgical suture placement device of claim 1, wherein the suturing assembly further comprises a hollow needle configured to enable a suture to pass through a portion of the needle, the suture extending from an aperture on a surface at a proximal end of the needle to an opening at a sharpened distal end of the needle.

6. (Previously Presented) The surgical suture placement device of claim 1, further comprising a thin flexible rod arranged within the hollow inner tube wherein the rod is connected at a proximal end to the handle assembly and has a distal end configured for connection to a needle located within the suturing assembly.

7. (Original) The surgical suture placement device of claim 1, wherein the hollow inner tube is flexible.

8. (Previously Presented) The surgical suture placement device of claim 1, further comprising a needle plunger arranged within the handle assembly, wherein a distal end of the needle plunger attaches to a proximal end of a needle by means of a thin rod, wherein the thin rod traverses the interior of the flexible hollow tube.

9. (Original) The surgical suture placement device of claim 8, further comprising a spring that biases the needle plunger into an extended position and the needle into a retracted position.

10. (Original) The surgical suture placement device of claim 1, wherein the suturing assembly is angled away from a longitudinal axis of the elongated hollow outer tube.

11. (Original) The surgical suture placement device of claim 1, wherein a longitudinal axis of the suture assembly is at a 45° angle to a longitudinal axis of the elongated hollow outer tube.

12. (Previously Presented) The surgical suture placement device of claim 1, further comprising a sleeve that is rigidly attached to the hollow outer tube and has a diameter greater than a diameter of the hollow outer tube, wherein the handle assembly is rotatable within the sleeve.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Previously Presented) The surgical suture placement device of claim 1, wherein the suturing assembly comprises:

- a needle cover attached to the elongated hollow outer tube;
- a needle guide with a suture aperture attached to the needle cover; and
- a suture holder attached to the needle guide, wherein the needle guide is secured between the needle cover and the suture holder.

15. (Withdrawn) A method of suturing a first tissue to a second tissue, the method comprising;

- obtaining a suture placement device of claim 1 and loading the device with a needle and suture;
- moving a distal portion of the suture placement device into proximity of tissue to be sutured;
- positioning the suturing assembly at a proper angle;

extending a suture needle through a portion of a first tissue;
retracting the needle leaving a first loop of suture extending from the first tissue;
extending the needle through a portion of a second tissue;
retracting the needle leaving a second loop of suture extending from the second tissue;
and
connecting the first and second loop of suture to suture the first tissue to the second tissue.

16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, wherein the first and second loops of suture are connected with a crimping device.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, wherein the method is a surgical anastomosis.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Canceled)

20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, wherein the suture placement device is not removed from the proximity of the tissue until suturing is complete.

21. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, wherein the first and second tissues are different.

22. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, wherein the first and second tissues are different sections of the same tissue.

23. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, wherein the tissue to be sutured is adjacent to a body cavity, the suture placement device is inserted into the body cavity, and is not removed from the body cavity until the suturing is complete.

24. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 23, wherein the body cavity is the bladder, the first tissue to be sutured is a urethra, and the second tissue to be sutured is a bladder neck.

25. (Previously Presented) The surgical suture placement device of claim 14, further comprising suture material and a hollow needle, wherein:

the needle cover includes a suture hole;

the suture holder is a spool; and

the needle guide includes a curved portion in which the hollow needle is located, the suture hole is adjacent to a concave portion of the curved portion and the suture material is loaded on the spool and extends through the suture hole to the hollow needle.

26. (Previously Presented) The surgical suture placement device of claim 6, wherein the hollow outer tube is rigid and has a bent portion.

27. (New) The surgical suture placement device of claim 6, wherein:

the handle assembly includes a sleeve that is rigidly attached to the hollow outer tube and has a diameter greater than a diameter of the hollow outer tube; and

between the handle assembly and the suturing assembly the device consists of the hollow inner tube, the hollow outer tube and the rod.

28. (New) The surgical suture placement device of claim 27, further comprising a needle plunger arranged within the handle assembly, wherein a distal end of the needle plunger attaches to a proximal end of the needle by means of a thin rod and a cylindrical region of the

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suturing assembly that is between the proximal end of the suturing assembly and the distal end has an aperture for the needle to exit from the suturing assembly.